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UNPRETENTIOUS  
VERSES

J. THURLOW KOMMER



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# Unpretentious Verses

*A Book of Poems*

By

J. THURLOW KOMMER



Philadelphia  
Robert E. Lynch's Sons  
Publishers

1911

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THIS LITTLE BOOK  
IS DEDICATED TO ONE WHOSE  
LIFE WAS TO ME AN INSPIRATION,  
AND WHOSE MEMORY, AFTER A LAPSE OF  
EIGHTEEN YEARS, IS AS SWEET  
AND FRESH AS THE BREATH  
OF FLOWERS.

**My Mother.**





## Preface

These "Unpretentious Verses" were written at intervals extending over a period of some seven or eight years, and are simply the result of an intense longing to express one's self in verse. Sometimes while travelling in the cars, sometimes while waiting for lunch, or whenever a leisure moment could be snatched from the busy hours of an active career, these verses were created. As the title implies, the author makes no pretense to any literary standing and therefore hopes for a lenient criticism.

J. T. K.



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## PART I.

### **Mother and Home.**

---

Be it near or be it far,  
Home is where the loved ones are.



# Unpretentious Verses

---

## SINCE MOTHER WENT AWAY.

The old home seems a different place  
From what it used to be ;  
'Twas once the dearest, sweetest spot  
In all the world to me ;  
But she who made it so has gone,  
With other friends to stay.  
The old home seems a different place  
Since mother went away.

And she has gone for good, ah me !  
'Tis hard to think it true ;  
Another home has welcomed her  
Beyond the sky of blue ;  
And we must do without her here  
For many a weary day ;  
O ! how the old home seems to change  
When mother goes away.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE LAUGHTER OF A CHILD.

Nature's sweetest gift of grace  
Is a child with laughing face.

For the laughter of a child  
Is like music, weird and wild.

Like the tinkling of a bell  
In an unfrequented dell.

Merrier than the huntsman's horn  
At the breaking of the dawn.

Like the rippling of a wave  
In a lone enchanted cave ;

Or the rustling of the leaves,  
Answering to the summer breeze.

Sweeter than the sweetest words,  
Lovelier than the song of birds.

Heaven itself is oft beguiled  
With the laughter of a child.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### SWINGING IN THE LONG AGO.

To and fro, to and fro,  
O how gently do we go,  
Swinging in the long ago;  
Hear the children shout and sing  
As they wait a turn to swing.

To and fro, to and fro,  
Sometimes high and sometimes low,  
Swinging in the long ago;  
What delightful memories cling  
'Round that dear old-fashioned swing.

To and fro, to and fro,  
Mother calls and we must go,  
Swinging in the long ago;  
But the swing keeps swinging on  
Others come when we are gone.

To and fro, to and fro,  
On the swing of life we go,  
Thinking of the long ago;  
Love's old swing is swinging slow  
Some One calls and we must go.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### A LASTING DEBT.

All that the future holds for me,  
In this life or another,  
All that I am or hope to be  
I owe it to my mother.

If there are evils I have missed,  
Or sins that I've forsaken ,  
Her gentle voice it was that called  
The man in me to waken.

If I have helped some other man,  
Some weak and struggling brother,  
I did it in the strength of love,  
The love that followed mother.

And any good I may possess,  
That calls for commendation,  
The debt of gratitude I owe  
To mother's ministration.

So while this busy life shall last,  
And mayhap in that other,  
My grateful heart shall strive to pay  
The debt I owe my mother.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### AN UNFORGOTTEN VOICE.

When the busy day is over,  
And the west is tinged with red;  
When the twilight falls around me,  
And the stars are overhead—  
Then old memories awaken voices  
That were silenced years ago,  
And I hear the voice of mother  
Speaking to me sweet and low.

When I pass within the shadow  
Of the slumberland of rest,  
When the shroud of mystery folds me,  
And I dream of all the blest—  
Ah! those unforgotten voices,  
How they fall upon my ear,  
And above them all, so clearly,  
Mother's voice I still can hear.

When the day of life is over,  
And there comes the evening star;  
When I pass the Golden Gateway  
To the wonderland afar—  
How my anxious heart shall listen,  
As I near the white-robed throng,  
For the voice of that dear mother,  
More than all the angel song.

# UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

## THE FIRST BORN

TO F. B. S.

Safely folded to her breast  
Is the long-awaited guest;  
All her anxious fears are gone  
For to her a child is born.

From the vale of gloom and death  
She has brought a living breath;  
And the wonder in her eyes  
Tells of joy and glad surprise.

Here is joy that puts to shame  
Every joy that mortals claim:  
Love that is akin to love  
In the heart of God above.

With her child upon her breast  
Mother is supremely blest:  
Eden never knew a bliss  
More divinely sweet than this.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### MY MOTHER'S FACE.

I see it now, that face so dear,  
'Tis on my memory traced;  
Time cannot cause to disappear  
The vision of her face.  
I see it in my waking hours,  
I see it in my dreams,  
And fairer than the fairest flowers  
Its beauty to me seems.

I see the look of sympathy  
From eyes grown bright with love;  
The look that meant so much to me  
As with the world I strove.  
The look of kind approval, too,  
That helped me to be strong;  
The look of sadness when she knew  
That I had done the wrong.

The smile that cheered my broken heart  
I see it still to-day:  
How often did it joy impart  
And chase my gloom away.  
O! precious memories of the past  
Find in my heart a place;  
Till I shall see in Heaven at last  
My mother's blessed face.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### A SACRED SPOT.

O, let me kneel just here,  
Just here where mother knelt!  
That I may feel within my breast  
The joy that mother felt.

Then, let me linger here,  
The while my heart is sad,  
That to my troubled soul may come  
The peace that mother had.

This dear and sacred spot  
To me is hallowed ground;  
For here I find the friend I need,  
The Christ that mother found.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### IF MOTHER KNEW.

If mother knew how you have strayed  
And from the good departed,  
How you have left the narrow road,  
And all your manhood bartered;  
Ah, me! I'm sure her tender heart  
Would be all torn and bleeding,  
If she could see, through all her tears,  
The kind of life you're leading.

For, when you left her years ago,  
To follow fortune's beckoning,  
Your eye was clear, your hand was strong,  
And in her way of reckoning  
She little thought that time would mar  
The child that she had nourished;  
The boy whose life was more to her  
Than all else that she cherished.

But, oh! how you have changed since then;  
Your eye has lost its glitter;  
Your face shows many a scar of sin  
And life is hard and bitter.  
Ah, yes! 'tis well she does not know!  
Good God! reveal it never:  
The knowledge of her son's disgrace  
Hide from her eyes for ever.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE SWEETEST LOVE.

The sweetest love in all the world,  
And equaled by no other,  
Is such as stirs the heart and life  
Of a devoted mother.

A love that labors ceaselessly  
To make some burden lighter,  
That works without a thought of gain  
To make some life the brighter.

A love that never, never tires,  
And never groweth weary;  
That finds the fullness of its joy  
In making life more cheery.

Unselfish in whate'er it does,  
And asketh but this token,  
The answering love from other lives  
Revealed in deed or spoken.

O! for a love like mother's love!  
Be this my constant pleading!  
O! for a love like mother's love!  
'Tis what the world is needing.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### SLEEPY TOWN.

When shadows of the evening fall,  
And night spreads darkness over all,  
When comes the closing of the day,  
And little folk are tired of play—  
A marching host of great renown  
Tramps on its way to Sleepy Town.

All uniformed in robes of white,  
With candle-torch to give them light :  
A mother's kiss to urge them on,  
A sweet "Good-night," and they are gone :  
Up! up! the wooden hill they go,  
For Sleepy Town's up high, you know.

Ere long the quiet town they gain,  
Where needed rest they may obtain ;  
But ere they pass within its gates  
Each white-robed pilgrim, kneeling, waits  
To ask the Shepherd King come down  
To guard the host of Sleepy Town.

And now, 'tis silent as the grave ;  
You hear no sound of voices, save  
The sound of mother's nursery clock  
In measured tones—"Tick-tock, tick-tock" ;

## UNPRETENTIOUS, VERSES

---

No childish noise is heard to drown  
The faithful clock in Sleepy Town.

But when the sun peeps o'er the hills,  
And with new life all nature thrills,  
When twittering bird and songster gay  
Proclaim the waking of the day,  
The marching host of great renown  
Comes tramping back from Sleepy Town.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THANKSGIVING.

For country and for flag,  
For Freedom's blood-washed soil,  
The land our fathers loved  
And hallowed by their toil;  
For this dear land, with freedom ringing,  
We render thee a glad Thansgiving.

For home and fireside,  
A refuge and retreat;  
For all the sacred ties  
Of kin, and friendship, sweet;  
For home, with all its love-light gleaming,  
We offer Thee a glad thanksgiving.

For church, and liberty,  
To worship as we will;  
For faith in all the good  
And power to shun the ill:  
For all the joy of holy living  
We render Thee a glad thanksgiving.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### SOMEHOW OR OTHER.

Somehow or other you can tell,  
As day by day he meets you,  
What sort of man your neighbor is  
Just by the way he greets you;  
The way he looks you in the eye,  
Your searching glance returning;  
The way he takes you by the hand,  
And how he says "Good morning."

Somehow or other you can feel  
A sympathetic tingle,  
Both in the hand-shake and the voice,  
As now and then you mingle;  
A something indescribable,  
Beyond the power of telling;  
The mystic touch of soul with soul,  
Inviting or repelling.

Somehow or other when you pass  
To other scenes and places,  
And leave behind you friends of yore  
And old familiar faces,  
Both you and they shall still recall,  
In strange and wondrous measure,  
The greetings in the days gone by  
With either pain or pleasure.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE UNCERTAIN SPAN.

Between the child of youthful days  
And yonder aged man  
There lies a world of changing years,  
A vast, uncertain span.

And he who starts to cross the bridge,  
'Twixt early life and late,  
Must be prepared for weal or woe,  
For grief or blissful state.

For who can know, or who can tell  
What lies beyond his gaze,  
Beyond the curtain that divides  
To-day from future days?

But at the end of every life  
There lies some cherished goal;  
Who reaches it must strength possess  
Of body, mind and soul.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### HOME IS WHERE THE LOVED ONES ARE.

Be it near or be it far,  
Home is where the loved ones are.

For without love's burning flame  
Home is nothing but a name.

But where love's pure light doth shine  
There's a brilliancy divine ;

And the meanest spot on earth  
Is a paradise of mirth.

For a home where love is leaven  
Is the highest type of heaven.

Whether near or whether far,  
Home is where the loved ones are.

PART II.  
Voices of Nature.

---

All nature seemeth fair  
When faith inspires the view ;  
Naught with her can compare  
To charm our souls anew.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### BUTTERCUPS.

Peeping up above the sod,  
See how merrily they nod!  
Little pilgrims sent of God.

O, what multitudes untold  
Stand arrayed, like queens of old,  
In rare garments green and gold.

Scattered over hill and vale  
In a wondrous golden trail,  
Dancing in the faintest gale.

But how quickly do they pass,  
Hiding faces 'neath the grass,  
Like some bashful little lass.

Will they ever lift again  
Faces bathed in sun and rain,  
As a maiden fair and vain?

Yes, when twelve months have gone round,  
Once again, all sweetly gowned,  
Buttercups will strew the ground.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE SOUL OF THE SEA.

I stand beside the ocean shore,  
While thought crowds thought yet more and more,  
And as I watch thy ceaseless roll  
I feel that thou, too, hast a soul.

A soul that stirs thee at its will,  
For thou art never, never still.  
Oh! restless sea, 'twixt man and thee,  
How strong a bond of sympathy!

For thou art tossed by wind and storm,  
Thy bosom by the tempest torn;  
Forever o'er thy trackless waste  
The elements in fury haste.

The surging, seething, foaming wave  
Uplifts itself as from a grave:  
The lightning's flash, the thunder's roll  
Wake all the voices of thy soul.

Thou seemest like a demon's child,  
Now maddened by a spirit wild.  
Lashed into fury by the gale  
Thy soul lifts up its mournful wail.

Deep down within the human breast  
There dwells the spirit of unrest,

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

And often o'er the troubled life  
Come storm and tempest, rage and strife.

When passions dark gain mastery,  
When demons gloat in hellish glee,  
The soul in fearful anguish torn  
Mourns as the sea when in a storm.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE OLD YEAR.

He'll soon be gone, for even now  
The marks of death are on his brow ;  
And we stand watch with listening ear,  
Like friend with friend whose end is near.  
The old year now is dying !

The joys he brought, the sorrows, too,  
Though they be many or be few,  
Will like the year but shortly last  
And soon be memories of the past.  
The old year now is dying.

Farewell old year ! Farewell to thee ;  
Thy wearied soul shall soon be free ;  
And we stand watch with listening ear,  
Like friend with friend whose end is near.  
The old year now is dying.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE NEW YEAR.

He'll soon be here ! and we shall greet  
The sprightly tread of youthful feet ;  
And we wait with listening ear,  
The coming of the glad new year.  
The new year is approaching.

What he shall bring us no one knows ;  
Or what shall leave us 'ere he goes ;  
His gifts from all are kept concealed  
And in good time to each revealed ;  
The new year is approaching.

Then welcome to the glad new year !  
We hail thy coming with good cheer !  
Like friend for friend we waiting stand  
To greet thee with an outstretched hand.  
The new year is approaching.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### SUNSET.

When I look out across the fields  
To where the sun is sinking,  
The glory of that wondrous scene  
Sets all my heart to thinking,  
And wondering—if away beyond,  
In some far distant evening,  
There can be sight as grand and fair  
As when the sun is leaving.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### MOONLIGHT.

The last faint glow of the setting sun  
Has faded into gloom ;  
While darkened skies  
The light defies,  
Proclaiming now it's doom.

O'er all the earth falls the infinite shroud  
Of an impenetrable night.  
All Nature's blue  
Has changed its hue,  
Departed is the light.

The vast expanse of the circling heavens  
Is studded thick with stars ;  
The garment worn  
By earth, and adorned  
With glints of diamond bars.

The scurrying clouds in their rapid flight,  
Unveil the silvery moon ;  
It surely seems  
That all its beams  
Are borrowed from the noon.

The Earth once more, from its sombre shade,  
Transformed by her pallid light,  
Glow with the ray,  
As if the day  
Had visited the night.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### NATURE'S FAITHFULNESS.

The sun shall never cease to shine  
As long as time remains ;  
Nor clouds shall e'er withhold from earth  
Their life refreshing rains.

The Summer's heat, the Winter's cold,  
Shall in their time prevail,  
And each its mission shall fulfill,  
Nor shall they ever fail.

The streams shall reach the boundless sea,  
Nor ever lose their way.  
The mountains raise their peaks toward heaven  
Till the heavens shall pass away.

The seed that dies beneath the ground  
Shall once again revive ;  
The blade, the stalk, the ripened fruit  
In order shall arrive.

With what precision Nature works,  
And settled law obeys ;  
Who will may valued lessons learn  
From all her faithful ways.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### SPACE.

Boundless infinitude ! Immeasurable ! Immense !  
Beyond the reach of human thought  
Or finite man's pretense.

Encircling all, and still by none encircled thou ;  
Through ages all a mystery ;  
No less a mystery now.

Deeper than any depth ; higher thou than all ;  
In length outreaching every length,  
Embracing great and small.

Before the worlds were framed, or time began its  
    sway,  
Thou wert and ever will remain  
When these shall fade away.

Eternal, like the God whose might has peopled  
    thee  
With wondrous worlds and blazing suns  
In vast immensity.

Throughout thy spacious realms and o'er thy  
    trackless way,  
The mightiest atom ever formed  
May travel on for aye.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

A million miles, to thee, is but the merest span,  
And thine is distance far remote,  
Unmeasured yet by man.

Incomprehensible! Ever a mystery;  
The wonder still of conscious souls  
Throughout eternity.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE SEASONS.

I love the Springtime with its showers,  
Its dreamy haze and fragrant flowers ;  
I love in solitude to stray  
Along some violet covered way,  
And while away the happy hours.

I love the Summer with its glee,  
Its verdant fields and leafy tree ;  
I love to linger 'neath the shade  
By overhanging branches made,  
And catch the song of bird and bee.

I love the Autumn brown and sere,  
The herald of the closing year ;  
The Autumn, with its fruit and grain,  
Made ripe by Summer sun and rain  
And garnered in with grateful cheer.

I love the Winter's mighty blast  
Whose breath has chained the rivers fast ;  
Whose hand spreads o'er the earth below,  
The mantle white, of spotless snow,  
That covers field and forest vast.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE PENOBSCOT.

O! beautiful Penobscot! New England's charming stream!

Thy glories are deserving a worthier poet's theme.

For as we sail thy waters, or view thee from the shore,

A thrill of admiration steals through us o'er and o'er.

Thee nature seems to favor with many a changing scene;

Sometimes a rock-bound pathway, sometimes through fields of green.

Along whose banks, like sentinels, the pine and fir trees rise;

While here the birch and cedar outline the glowing skies.

When gleams of golden sunlight beam on thy waters blue,

'Tis like a path of glory that opens to our view.

Or when the pale moon glitters across the dark of night,

Behold! upon thy bosom a trail of silvery light.

O! beautiful Penobscot! fair river deep and wide!  
Maine's sturdy sons have reason to look on thee with pride.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### IN TUNE WITH NATURE.

When fields are green and flowers deck the  
valleys,

When every tree is jubilant with song ;

When sunshine floods the earth with golden glory

And skies of blue prevail the whole day long ;

'Tis then the heart is blithe as merry music,

And every voice is lifted high in song.

When skies are gray and earth is dull and dreary,

When song of bird falls shrill upon the air ;

When fields are brown and every tree is leafless,

When barrenness and gloom are everywhere ;

Ah ! then, how oft the singing turns to sighing,

And what was mirth is now a plaintive air.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### SUMMER.

O! who would wish for happier hours,  
Or more delightful pleasures,  
Than come when comes the Summer time  
With all its matchless treasures?

The wondrous music of the woods,  
When birds are all asinging;  
The beauty of the meadow flowers  
That happy June keeps bringing.

The fragrance of the new mown hay,  
That careless feet turn over;  
The walk along some shady lane,  
Or through the fields of clover.

The sweet refreshing smell of rain  
As daylight fast is leaving;  
The breath of yonder coming storm  
To cool the hours of evening.

O! who can part without a tear  
From Summer days of gladness?  
Or who can say good-bye to June  
Without a tinge of sadness?

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### GOD IN NATURE.

The splendor of our Lord  
In Nature's works we see ;  
His riches are outpoured  
With lavish hand and free.

He covers all the earth  
With beauty and with grace,  
And gems of countless worth  
He buries 'neath its face.

All Nature seemeth fair  
When faith inspires the view.  
Naught with her can compare  
To charm our souls anew.

The flowers of varied hue,  
All laden with perfume,  
Sparkle with morning due  
And show forth love in bloom.

The tiniest blade that grows,  
The oak of mammoth height,  
Each tells how God bestows  
His gentleness and night.

The mountains towering high,  
The vast expanse of sea,  
Had they but voice to cry,  
Would hail God's majesty.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### AUTUMN.

The summer time has passed away  
And autumn days are here ;  
Most beautiful of all the days  
That crown the changing year.

The grass upon the meadow-land  
Gleams with the frosted dew ;  
The trees have changed their garb of green  
For one of varied hue.

It looks as if some fairy elf  
Had dipped his brush in gold,  
And, with a touch of magic power,  
His graceful art unrolled.

The woods are dressed in crimson robes,  
Arranged with utmost care ;  
The hedges wind about the fields  
Like threads of scarlet rare.

And not alone in brilliant tints  
Does autumn time abound ;  
But in its harvests, rich and sweet,  
With glorious fullness crowned.

Soon will the autumn days go by,  
And earth shall once more stand,  
Bereft of all her beauteous charms  
By winter's blighting hand.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE WOODS IN SPRING.

You hear the rustle of a wing,  
You hear the robin and bluebird sing,  
While loitering through the woods in spring.

Refreshed by morning's sparkling dew  
The May flowers nod a welcome true,  
The Arbutus and the violet blue.

The odor of the woods in spring  
Is such a sweet, delicious thing,  
'Tis perfume fit to please a king.

By mossy bank and trickling stream  
You linger long, the while you seem  
Entranced by some delightful dream.

The woods in spring, with verdure grown,  
Are like the ancient garden lone,  
Where God and Adam walked alone.



PART III.  
**The After Life.**

---

If death is all, then tell me why  
This longing for the Bye-and-Bye.





## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE PILOT.

The sea runs high!  
A storm is nigh,  
And we are far from home:  
Night comes apace,  
And we must face  
The angry waves alone.

Yet not alone  
Are they who own  
The Pilot from afar:  
A steersman he  
Who knows the sea  
Without a guiding star.

And when at last  
The night is past,  
And storm and tempest cease;  
With wind and tide  
We safely glide  
Into the port of peace.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### AT EVENTIDE.

“Now, when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them, and healed them.”

Yet once again 'tis eventide;  
And in the western sky  
The glory of the sunset hour  
Suggests that God is nigh:  
And once again, O gracious Lord,  
Before the darkness fall,  
We bring our broken hearts to thee,  
For thou canst heal them all.  
Our stricken souls are faint indeed,  
For sin hath laid them low;  
Our spirits cry to thee for life,  
Dear Lord! the gift bestow;  
And when life's sun at last shall set  
'To rise on earth no more,  
The eventide shall bring us health,  
Through Him whom we adore.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE RAINBOW.

There's a rainbow in the heavens,  
'Tis a promise from on high ;  
God's eternal goodness speaketh  
By this token in the sky.

What a vast stupendous archway !  
Reaching far, from sea to sea ;  
Even so God's mercy stretcheth  
Over all eternity.

After cloud and storm it cometh,  
When the sun breaks through the rift ;  
Thus shall come a brighter glory  
When the gloom of death shall lift.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE NIGHT IS DARK.

The night is dark, but soon will come the dawning  
When eyes long dimmed by sorrow's night  
Shall bathe at last in heaven's light.

The way is long, but hath some day an ending,  
When aching brow and tired feet  
Shall refuge find, and safe retreat.

The thorns are sharp, and hands are torn and  
bleeding,  
But soon the hour of pain will cease  
In God's eternal, quiet peace.

The cross is huge, and 'neath it forms are bending,  
But future years shall lift its weight,  
It cannot pass the "Golden Gate."

The storm is wild and human hearts are quaking;  
But life's rough sea will soon be crossed,  
And harbored safe the tempest-tossed.

Death's hand is cold, but why this fearful dreading?  
His touch will but release the soul  
And set it free from earth's control.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

Today we are what we are  
Because of yesterday ;  
For in the past we lay the plans  
For life today.

What tomorrow we shall be  
Depends upon today ;  
For what we build of character  
Shall with us stay.

And all the distant future,  
So dim and undiscerned,  
Tomorrow's life shall mould and shape  
Through truth we've learned.

And so, the past and present,  
Shall with the future blend,  
To build for us a life that must  
All time transcend.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE ETERNAL MORN.

After the sun has gone to rest,  
Faded the crimson in the west,  
    After the night has passed away  
    Cometh again the gleams of day,  
        Telling us hope is born.  
After the darkness, after the chill,  
After the hours when all is still  
    Cometh a ray of golden light,  
    Coming with life and power and might,  
        Cometh again the morn.

After a soul has gone to rest,  
Gone when the Lord shall deem it best,  
    After the darkness, after the grave,  
    After the crossing of Jordan's wave  
        Cometh a better dawn.  
After the gloom of death is o'er,  
After we reach the distant shore,  
    After the night has passed away  
    Cometh again the gleams of day,  
        Comes an eternal morn.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE DAY OF DAYS.

If it were always morning,  
How glad our hearts would be!  
With faces ever toward the east  
The rising sun to see.

How happy would we count it,  
If, on our day of life,  
The noontide never found us  
A-wearying in the strife.

And O! the thought of sadness  
That ever comes to stun,  
When evening crowds around us  
E'er all our work is done.

If it were always morning,  
How much our hands could do,  
As onward, still untiring,  
Life's labors we'd pursue.

And so we wait the coming  
Of that bright Day of days,  
When night shall no more darken  
The Sun's eternal rays.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### HOME AT LAST.

Travel-stained and weary,  
The pilgrim hastens on;  
It may be that life's toil some day  
Has only just begun;  
But in his heart is gladness,  
Though sky be overcast;  
For he is traveling with the hope  
Of reaching home at last.

Heavy-laden, footsore,  
He climbs the rugged ways;  
Life's noontide sun is in the heavens  
And scorching are its rays;  
But Hope her song is singing;  
Above the fiery blast  
He hears a voice that whispers low  
Of rest and home at last.

Tired with the journey  
Yet still unmoved by pain,  
His face is ever toward the west  
Where peace and joy remain.  
Bright Hope is still his portion,  
The mile-stones all are past,  
The sun has almost gone to rest  
And home is near at last.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

Lifted are the burdens,  
The journey now is o'er;  
Though travel-stained and worn with care  
He's passed the open door;  
And friends from whom he parted  
Are to his bosom clasped,  
Their voices mingled in the song  
Of "Welcome home at last."

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE TRAIL OF LIFE.

Sometimes along the sunlit hills  
Where daylight lingers longest ;  
Where faith is firm and hope is bright  
And heart and hand are strongest ;  
Above the jarring notes of strife,  
That fill the world with sadness,  
The path leads upward, where the peaks  
Are crowned with joy and gladness.

And sometimes down the vale of gloom  
Through mystic shadows winding ;  
Where hang the heavy clouds of sin,  
The pilgrim's vision blinding ;  
Where faith is weak, and hope is dull,  
And heart and hand are failing ;  
Where those who journey fear lest night  
Shall find their spirits quailing.

The trail along the sunlit hills  
Winds through earth's scenes of beauty,  
While all along the downward slope  
The traveler faces duty ;  
But whether upward to the heights  
Or down the vale of sorrow,  
The trail of life leads ever on  
To God's eternal morrow.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### IN THE HARBOR.

When the boat comes into harbor,  
With its sails all tattered,  
With its storm-swept decks deserted,  
And the masts all shattered,  
Who is there will blame the captain,  
Though the cargo may be lost,  
If the crew but make the haven,  
And the angry sea be crossed?

When we reach the eternal harbor,  
By the tempest driven,  
Though within the sea has perished  
All that earth has given,  
Surely none will blame the Captain,  
When at last the storm shall cease,  
If, with cheerings, and with shoutings,  
We shall hail the Port of Peace.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE PILGRIM'S FRIEND.

Death is but release from care and toil and sorrow ;  
The closing of a tiresome day—  
And rest upon the morrow.

Death is only sleep, after whose final waking  
A gladsome note of praise shall rise,  
Like songs when morn is breaking.

Death is but a stream, across whose placid waters  
The voyager may safely sail  
With all earth's sons and daughters.

'Tis the pilgrim's friend; the last of all to leave  
him;  
A silent friend, who never speaks  
An unkind word to grieve him.

'Tis a road that winds through regions dark and  
dreary,  
But endeth where the dawning light  
Of Heaven is bright and cheery.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### GRIEVE NOT FOR ME.

Grieve not for me when from this world departing,

My spirit leaves its tenement of clay;  
But rest in hope that some time in the future  
We'll meet again, another happier day;  
So lift the weight of sadness from thy heart  
And utter no complaint when I depart.

Grieve not for me when I have crossed the river,

The boatman shall return from yonder shore,  
And some day thou shalt take the quiet journey,  
And bid farewell to earth forevermore;  
While over there, with longing heart I'll wait  
To welcome thee, close by the Golden Gate.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### IMMORTALITY.

And can it ever be  
That this is all of life?  
The weary toil, the aching brow,  
Till death the bitter strife?  
If this be true, then why remain  
To suffer one more pang of pain?

And must we still believe  
That death is all supreme?  
That life shall lose itself at last  
In this dark, sullen stream?  
Then why eternal goodness crave,  
If there's no hope beyond the grave?

And all the sacred ties  
That bind us heart to heart,  
Shall they be severed, once for all,  
When friends from earth depart?  
If so it be, then tell me, why  
This longing for the "bye and bye?"

Ah, surely there must be  
A better life than this;  
A life where nevermore shall end  
The measure of our bliss:  
Where nevermore shall come again  
The heart-ache and the fevered brain.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### HERE AND THERE.

Here the sorrow and the sighing,  
    There the joyful song of praise;  
Here the darkness and the dying,  
    There the life through endless days,  
Here the cross of bitter anguish,  
    There the crown with glory bright;  
Here the cry of souls that languish,  
    There the shoutings of delight.

Here the good and evil mingling,  
    There the pure and undefiled;  
Here the waywardness and sinning,  
    There the spirit of the child,  
Here the wishing and the wondering,  
    There to know as we are known;  
Here the puzzling and the pondering,  
    There to walk with God alone.

Here the weariness of toiling,  
    There the blessedness of rest;  
Here from danger oft recoiling,  
    There the safety of the blest,  
Here the waiting and the longing,  
    There to meet our loved and own;  
Here the pilgrims homeward thronging,  
    There the gathering 'round the throne.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

'TIS BEST TO THINK OF DAYS TO COME.

'Tis best to think of days to come,  
Wherever they may find us,  
Than to recall the years gone by  
With all they may remind us.

'Tis best to look with eager eye  
For gladness on the morrow.  
Than to complain of yesterday  
Because it brought thee sorrow.

'Tis better far to sing with hope  
Than to despair in silence;  
The grief that shuts thy spirit in  
Will do thee greater violence.

The best of life is yet to come,  
When joy shall banish sorrow;  
The western sky gives promise of  
A brighter day to-morrow.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE CHIMES OF HOPE.

"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust"!  
And is this all, or may I trust  
When over me these words are spoken—  
'Tis only that the bond is broken,  
Which held my captive spirit fast  
And chained me to the restless past?

Then, whither shall my soul take flight—  
To regions dark or realms of light?  
Shall I go as a lonely stranger,  
Trembling before expected danger?  
Or, shall some wondrous Presence stand  
To greet me in the unknown land?

Ah! verily it must be so!  
Else who is there would dare to go?  
Or who would ever face the morrow  
Without a fear nor trace of sorrow?  
Did not the chimes of Hope impart  
A note of gladness to each heart?



## PART IV.

### **Miscellaneous.**

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Nor this nor that is all of life,  
    'Tis somewhat of a mixture,  
And like stray hairs upon the head  
    No plan is quite a fixture.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE VALUE OF A SMILE.

Smile, and the world will bless you;  
Frown, and its curse you bear;  
For the sad old earth will measure your worth  
By the countenance that you wear.  
Life has its gloom and sadness;  
Escape it you may try in vain;  
But a smile on your face will help to erase  
The lines of anguish and pain.

Smile, and 'twill be reflected  
In the soul of each man you greet;  
But a frown on your brow is repelling, somehow,  
And will cause even friends to retreat.  
There's a gleam of heavenly gladness  
In the smile of an honest face,  
And the gleam will last when the life is past,  
As a beacon light of grace.

Smile, and your facial radiance  
Shall illumine the world's dark night;  
For the spirit of cheer will hover near,  
When the fact is wreathed in light.  
Smile, and you win a welcome;  
Frown, and the curse is there;  
For the sad old earth will measure your worth  
By the countenance that you wear.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE BEST DEEDS.

The sweetest flower that ever grew  
Is not the rose or violet blue;  
But, mayhap one of beauty shorn,  
Yet fragrant as the early morn.

The brightest sun that ever shone  
In yonder blue of Heaven's dome,  
Is that which shines to give Earth light,  
But not to wither, scorch or blight.

The happiest days we spend on earth  
Are not the days of giddy mirth:  
But those wherein we do some deed  
To help a brother in his need.

The greatest acts that men perform,  
Are not the works of vain pride born;  
But in some humble lowly state,  
The deed of love alone is great.

The richest gains the soul counts o'er  
Are not the gains in earthly store;  
But those laid up in Heaven above,  
The richest treasures of our love.

The jeweled crown that saints shall wear  
Is not bedecked with diamonds rare;  
But sparkles brighter than Earth's sun  
With loving deeds of duty done.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### FORGET THE PAST.

(FROM THE PROSE OF LONGFELLOW.)

Forget the past, and bury in oblivion  
The memories of the days of yore:  
It comes not back, nor good nor evil bringing;  
The yesterdays return no more.

To-day is thine; act in it well and wisely,  
Increasing now thy present store:  
Be thou alert, each golden hour improving,  
Else soon they pass the open door.

And if good fortune spare thee till the morrow,  
Thy place be field or forge or mart,  
Go forth to meet that all uncertain future  
With courage and a manly heart.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE POWER OF THOUGHT.

Strange product of the brain,  
What wondrous power is thine :  
For thou art not controlled  
By either place or time.

We cannot barriers raise  
To check thee in thy flight,  
Through regions yet unknown  
Thou roamest with delight.

Sometimes through future years,  
Untrod by mortal man ;  
Through paths so undefined  
No mortal eye can scan.

And sometimes through the past,  
Where memory lingers long,  
Back through the distant years  
That to the dead belong.

How quickly thou dost fly  
Through realms of boundless space :  
And in a moment's time  
The universe embrace.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### VERSICLES.

Ye lads and lassies learn this truth  
And ne'er from it depart;  
That he who would a conqueror be  
Must conquer first his heart.

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Although we fail so often in attaining,  
And never reach the goal of perfect life;  
Remember this, the virtue is in striving,  
And rich reward comes after manly strife.

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Not more of knowledge that we need,  
Nor is it power to do;  
But most of all a willing mind  
To make our service true.

---

Nor this, nor that, is all of life;  
'Tis somewhat of a mixture;  
And like stray hairs upon the head,  
No plan is quite a fixture.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE GOSPEL OF GOOD CHEER.

The man who thinks the world is wrong  
And feels forlorn and blue,  
Whose troubles rise like mountain peaks  
To hide the good from view;  
I say that this man needs to learn  
The gospel of good cheer,  
And needs to know that Hope will bring  
A smile for every tear.

For there's abundant happiness  
In this old world of ours;  
The thorns may pierce your bleeding feet  
But yonder bloom the flowers;  
And so I say to every man  
Who drinks the bitter cup,—  
Don't let your troubles keep you down,  
My brother, cheer thee up!

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### LOVE ETERNAL.

Love is the virtue and the grace  
That fits men for the greater place.

Love lifts the burden, rights the wrong,  
And cheers the drooping heart with song.

Love gives the best, and gives the most,  
Yet never of its alms doth boast.

Humility, gift from above,  
Is stamped on all the deeds of love.

Love bears the sorrow, takes the blame,  
Despising all reproach and shame.

Love seeks that others may obtain,  
And envieth not a brother's gain.

Endures with patience earthly ills,  
And selfish clamorings promptly stills.

Love faileth not ; all else shall fail  
And be forgotten as a tale :

But love shall evermore remain  
On earth, in heaven, the noblest strain.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE VICTOR.

It matters not though you may fall  
And fail to hear the captain's call  
    Amid the battle's din.  
Men cannot say that you have failed,  
Though in the dust your colors trailed,  
    If you have fought to win.

For he deserves the victor's wreath,  
Immortal as the gods bequeathe  
    To all who conquer sin:  
If, struggling on with might and main,  
He counts not either loss or gain,  
    But ever fights to win.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE BETTER WAY.

It will pay you to be cheery,  
Rather than to wear the frown;  
For the cheerful face is worthy  
Of the sceptre and the crown:  
For it makes the world the brighter,  
And it's surely worth one's while  
To relieve earth's darkened shadows  
With the brightness of a smile.

You can speak the word of kindness  
To uplift the drooping heart;  
For it takes no more of effort  
Than to speed the poisoned dart;  
But what a vast and mighty difference,  
When we reckon things aright,  
Whether words in love are spoken  
Or in anger take their flight.

You can do the deed of mercy  
With a willing hand and true;  
Doing unto others daily  
As you'd have them do to you:  
Human hearts will fondly cherish  
Every act that meets their need  
And the world will be the better  
For the smile, the word, the deed.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE MONARCH.

Love is a monarch  
Strong and bold,  
And rules o'er kingdoms  
Vast, untold.

Not with a rod of  
Ancient mould,  
But with a scepter  
Wrought in gold.

Not with a voice of  
Thunder tone,  
But with a stillness  
All his own.

While other sovereigns  
Leave the throne,  
Love lives to conquer  
All alone.

Ever before him  
Slaves are we,  
And in subjection  
Bend the knee.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### LEARN TO WAIT.

Yes! learn to wait; 'tis easier far  
To crowd in where the workers are,  
Than to hold aloof or stand afar.

'Tis easier, too, to fight along  
With soldiers who repel the wrong,  
Than to await the victor's song.

'Tis hard to fold the hands and rest,  
With patient heart to stand the test,  
And feel that, after all, 'tis best.

The hardest task is just to wait:  
To know that whether soon or late  
God plans the end, and not blind fate.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### WHEN LOVE IS THE HARPER.

Deep down in the heart of each mortal that liveth  
Lie slumbering emotions, as yet all unstirred ;  
All dormant, yet ready to spring into action  
When reached and awakened by deed or by  
word.

Sometimes with the force of an on-rushing  
torrent,  
That carries destruction and death in its path,  
The feelings once roused by the demon of hatred  
Stay not, till in vengeance they spend all their  
wrath.

Sometimes, like the wail of a soul in its anguish,  
When chords have been touched by the dark  
hand of grief ;  
While copious tears, flowing as from a fountain,  
Afford to the heart sweet and blessed relief.

Sometimes, like the harp, in the hands of a harper,  
Whose strings, though once silent, sweet  
melody find ;  
Thus wakens the soul into music all glorious  
When love is the harper that touches mankind.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### DELAY NOT.

Delay not this day's duty  
Until to-morrow's sun,  
But make each passing moment  
Complete in service done:  
The day is brief, and soon will fall  
The curtain of the night o'er all.

Delay not! for the morrow,  
If it should dawn for thee,  
Shall crowded be with duties,  
And so 'twill ever be;  
What work to-day thou mayest shun  
Forever will remain undone.

Delay not! for the future  
To thee is all unknown,  
And thou art only granted  
The present hour alone:  
Delay will mean for thee defeat,  
And death shall find thee incomplete.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE CALL OF LOVE.

The sea was made for sailing,  
Then ho! lads, to the sea!!  
The fields invite the ploughman,  
Then come and plough with me.

But what's the use of sailing,  
If boats were made to row;  
Or why should men be ploughing  
If grain were not to grow!

The roses waste their sweetness,  
If none there be who care  
To revel in the fragrance  
That's wafted on the air.

The voice of love is calling  
Nor shall it call in vain:  
For hearts were made for loving,  
As clouds were made for rain.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### LIFE AND DEATH.

'Twixt Life and Death, earth's ever silent rulers,  
Rank enmity exists and bitter strife;  
And never do they pass a friendly greeting,  
For Death is fiendish when he meets with Life.  
Like some kind monarch Life rules o'er his own,  
'Till Death relentlessly assumes the throne.

Life scatters hope, and rays of light and sunshine,  
And in his trail immortal flowers bloom;  
While envious Death, like some dark visaged monster  
With outstretched wings, o'ershades the path with  
gloom;  
And where Life planted flowers to adorn  
Death follows on with thistle and with thorn.

Both young and old give Life their fondest service;  
They do his bidding as they come and go;  
Thus would they serve him without stint or measure  
If left untrammelled by this fearful foe:  
But Death lurks near Life's subjects to annoy,  
To hinder, hamper, cripple and destroy.

Some far-off day, or mayhap some day nearer,  
A song of triumph Nature's sons shall sing,

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

To find that in one long and final struggle  
Life vanquished Death, and robbed him of his  
sting:  
That Life has forced all powers in earth to yield  
And Death forevermore must quit the field.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### OPTIMISM.

What care I for the howling storm,  
Or the tempest's furious blast?  
There's a shelter for me, somewhere, I know,  
'Till the storm be overpast.

What care I though the darkness deep  
Covers the land and the sea?  
There's a gleam of light from the farther shore,  
That will light a path for me.

And though the mists becloud the sky,  
And the earth seems sad and drear,  
I know that the sun will shine again  
With its warmth of life and cheer.

And what if the daily cup of life  
Be sometimes filled with gall;  
At the fount of bliss I'll forget my grief,  
And the bitterness of it all.

Then rejoice my soul, and sing with glee,  
For the evil comes not to stay!  
And to-morrow the eyes shall beam with joy  
That are filled with tears to-day.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE MAN FOR THE TIMES.

Give me the man who will act a man's part  
    'Mid the strenuous battles of life;  
Who will stand unmoved on the rock of truth  
    'Gainst the threatening waves of strife.

Whose heart has been tried by the fires of heaven;  
    Whose soul from all fear has been freed;  
The man whose religion is more than a form,  
    And whose faith is more than a creed.

Who will stand unswervingly for the right  
    Though the multitude choose the wrong;  
Who cannot be lured by the glitter of gold  
    Nor even the world's siren song.

The man who can feel the strivings within  
    Of a conscience that's easily stirred;  
Who never delays to answer the call  
    When the voice of duty is heard.

Who prizes his honor above all else,  
    And serves till the day is done;  
Who never deserts in the hour of need,  
    But fights till the battle is won.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### IN THE MORNING.

If things look dark and dismal now—  
Just be a little patient, thou,  
And wait until the dawning.  
'Tis then the birds begin to sing,  
The shadows fade, and everything  
Seems brighter in the morning.

If Life's hard problems seem to you  
A little more than you can do,  
Just take a kindly warning—  
Don't try to solve them in the night,  
For you've a chance to get them right  
By waiting 'till the morning.

If there is some unpleasant work  
That you may seem inclined to shirk,  
This truth you should be learning—  
That many a task would easier be  
If you would wait 'till darkness flee,  
And do it in the morning.

If at the close of day you feel  
A sort of languor o'er you steal,  
Just wait until the morning;  
For then you'll be as one refreshed,  
And ready, too, to stand the test  
Of labor in the morning.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### A RETROSPECTIVE

When I look back across Life's way  
What sad regrets awaken,  
As I behold, through bitter tears,  
The path I should have taken.

The thought of good I might have done  
The passing years have brought me,  
And unused opportunities  
A bitter lesson taught me.

If I could but retrace my steps,  
And start at the beginning,  
I'd shun the road that led my feet  
To waywardness and sinning.

And do the deeds that love requires,  
Forsaking virtue, never ;  
But what's the use of musing thus?  
The past is gone forever.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### ONE WOMAN'S LOVE.

She loved him, yes, and loved him well,  
A man whose life was black as hell;

Ah! surely love is blinded!

Else how could one so good as she  
Be drawn to one so vile as he,  
Or one so earthly minded.

For she was pure as driven snow;  
'Twas if an angel, bending low,  
Should stoop to kiss a devil,  
She may have thought that love would win;  
That love could lift him out of sin  
And raise him to her level.

But now she knows 'twas all in vain;  
And though her tears fall like the rain,  
Nor tears nor love can save him;  
And while his friends are now but few,  
One thing remaineth ever true,  
The love that first she gave him.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE GRIM DESTROYER.

With hollow eyes and cheek of bone,  
With nerve of steel and heart of stone;  
'Tis thus in fancy that we trace  
The grim Destroyer of the Race.

With figure gaunt and features bold,  
With icy hand and fingers cold;  
With whispered voice and silent tread  
He summons us to join the dead.

With pallied brow and ghastly stare,  
With dampened locks of whitened hair;  
He calls to us though life we crave  
To follow to the silent grave.

Of pity he but little knows,  
And mercy scarcely ever shows;  
Men cannot bribe him with their wealth  
Nor yet escape him by their stealth.

Sometimes with hurried step and strong;  
Sometimes he tarries late and long;  
But soon or late he visits all  
And shrouds in darkness great and small.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### EVIL VOICES.

Be still, O heart of mine!  
These strange confusing voices seem  
The counterpart of some wild dream,  
Within a haunted shrine.

Yet all too real are they;  
And loud, and ever louder still,  
They call to rouse the conscious will  
Their dictates to obey.

Now urging thee to do  
Some deed, by evil passion stirred,  
Foul, dark, like some uncleanly bird,  
That hides its prey from view.

And now an act of shame;  
The demons of a Hellish race  
Join hands to bring to thee disgrace,  
And smirch a virtuous name.

Be still, O heart of mine!  
And when the evil voices stir,  
Give thou no heed, lest thou should err,  
And miss the mark divine.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### A LOVE SONG.

There was a maiden fair to see;  
I knew she loved and loved but me;  
Yet she would always hide it.

To have her pledge her love to me,  
I've failed, and failed most desperately,  
Though I have often tried it.

For after all, my lad, the test  
Of human love is love confessed,  
In earth or heaven above you;

And so my heart doth ever yearn  
To have her tell me in return,  
"I love you, dear, I love you."

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE SHADOWY LAND OF DREAMS.

"Good night," we say, and then away  
To the shadowy land of dreams;  
A nod and a wink, and before you can think  
You are there—at least so it seems.

Such very strange things the memory brings  
Back from this mystical sphere,  
That sometimes we wonder, as we sit and ponder,  
Whether we've really been there.

In this mystical land bewildered we stand,  
Enchanted by scenes of delight;  
Its wonders excel all that tongue can tell,  
Its glories burst forth on our sight.

'Tis not always so, for sometimes, you know,  
'Tis a horrible place indeed;  
Such awful fright! Such sorry plight!  
With no one to help in our need.

But not very long do we tarry among  
These changeable shadowy scenes;  
For, with shudder and shake we're quickly awake,  
And vanish the land of our dreams.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### MOLLY K—

Romping, teasing all the day,  
Such a girl is Molly K—.  
    Jolly face and full of fun,  
    Wreathed in smiles from sun to sun.

Happy as the day is long,  
Cheerful as a morning song;  
    Even though the skies be gray  
    Nothing bothers Molly K—.

Always getting into scrapes,  
Scarcely anything escapes.  
    If it's work instead of play  
    You can count on Molly K—.

Carelessly she skips along,  
Worries not if things go wrong;  
    When there seems to be delay  
    Every one blames Molly K—.

Kind, as everybody knows,  
Malice, rarely ever shows;  
    Anger does not with her stay,  
    Even-tempered Molly K—.

Tender hearted, moved by love,  
Gentle as a white winged dove;

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

Helping someone every day;  
Blessings on our Molly K——.

Strangest mixture ever known!  
Yet our Molly's not alone;  
Everywhere your feet may stray  
You can find a Molly K——.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### WAITING FOR THE FISH TO BITE.

On the bank of some cool stream,  
Where the rippling waters seem  
To sparkle with a crystal sheen,  
Where the shady nooks invite,  
Here we sit from morn 'till night  
Waiting for the fish to bite.

Even though the bait is fine,  
Oftentimes the fish decline  
To feed from off a hook and line;  
So with patience we must wait,  
'Till the nibbling at the bait  
Indicates poor finny's fate.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### HELEN—

Ah! yes, it is a pleasant task,  
Though difficult, this which you ask,  
The real Helen to unmask.

Shall I say fair of feature, face?  
Nay! nay! the rather let me trace  
Diviner forms of love and grace.

Beneath the outward and the seen  
A noble spirit, calm, serene,  
That hates the cowardly and mean.

That loves the truth, and lives it, too,  
Despising aught that has to do  
With falsehood, or with things untrue.

A well developed mind and strong,  
That stands like flint against the wrong,  
All heedless of the evil throng.

Though she has suffered much, God knows,  
Yet with a cheerful face she goes  
To help to lighten others' woes.

Unselfish in her every deed,  
With busy hands supplying need,  
The ministry of help her creed.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### WHEN LOVE RULES.

What though the wintry days be cold,  
And winter's snow may fall?  
There's summer gladness in the heart  
When love rules over all.

The night may be as dark as death,  
Its dreariness appall;  
Hope for the morrow flames and burns  
When love rules over all.

The world may be a silent place,  
With no sweet voice to call,  
But nature sings ten thousand tunes  
When love rules over all.

And work is but a dreary drudge,  
And tired hands may fall;  
But theres' no mean or common toil  
When love rules over all.

'Tis love that gives the soul a joy  
Akin to that above;  
For he's in tune with God and heaven  
Whose life is ruled by love.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### INQUISITIVENESS.

TO W H. K.

She's just a little brown-eyed girl,  
Who loves her dolls and books,  
'Tis hard to paint her picture here  
Or to describe her looks.  
She's neither very fat nor thin,  
Nor very short or tall;  
Just like some other girls you know,  
Whose names you may recall.

She's just like other girls because  
She always wants to know  
So much about the many things  
That puzzle grown folks so.  
She's asking questions all day long  
From early morn 'till dark.  
'Tis strange, indeed, she does not turn  
Into a question mark.

And I'm afraid this little girl,  
The fault will ne'er outgrow;  
For (let me whisper it to you),  
The grown-up girls are so;  
And womankind wherever found  
Is very much the same,  
For they are born inquisitive,  
And "Mother Eve's" to blame.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### WHEN WE WERE BOYS TOGETHER.

#### TO MY BROTHERS.

When we were boys together,  
In spite of wind and weather,  
No matter whether rain or shine—  
O! hadn't we a jolly time?

When we were boys together  
Care weighed as light as feather;  
There was no need to mope or whine  
For we had such a jolly time.

When we were boys together  
The good old horse we'd tether;  
We'd milk the cows and feed the swine,  
And then we'd have a jolly time.

When we were boys together  
Our hearts were tough as leather;  
For maiden fair we did not pine  
Because he had a jolly time.

When we were boys together  
We fought, as boys will ever;  
Their fault was, and sometimes mine,  
And yet we had a jolly time.

Once more we're boys together,  
For time has failed to sever  
The hearts that 'round each other twine  
To give us still a jolly time.

## PART V.

### Religious.

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Through the glass of earthly vision  
Things are dark and dimly traced,  
And the soul beholds its mission  
Only in the light of grace.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE PURE GARMENT.

Over the earth is the winter's snow,  
Covering all that lies below,  
Covering many a foul, dark blot,  
Many a scarred, unsightly spot,  
Pure and white like a garment, spread  
Under the living, over the dead.

Wouldst thou be pure as the whitened snow?  
Over thy soul must a garment go;  
Covering that dark and foulsome thing,  
Covering thy guilt, covering thy sin;  
Spread by the hand of the spotless One,  
Garment of faith in God's dear Son.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### TWO MEN.

Up to the ancient shrine  
There went two men to pray,  
The one a boastful Pharisee,  
Who chiefly went to say  
How good he was, and pour  
Into Jehovah's ear  
A flood of empty words, and vain,  
Thinking that God would hear.

The other trembling stood,  
Uncertain of his quest,  
His eyes toward heaven he dare not lift  
But smote upon his breast;  
No virtue does he claim  
Nor deed of good recall,  
Enough for him that Mercy's gate  
May open at his call.

Still at the modern shrine  
The two are found to-day!  
The Pharisee and the Publican  
Who enter there to pray.  
The one is unforgiven,  
The other justified;  
For mercy's gate is closed to all  
Who revel in their pride.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

Sunshine and shadow,  
Day after day;  
Daylight and darkness,  
God's perfect way:  
Not all of sunshine, nor all of night;  
Each has its purpose; God's way is right.

Seasons of gladness  
Come to us all;  
Sometimes dark shadows  
Around us fall:  
Life is a mixture of good and ill,  
And surely 'tis best, it is God's will.

Not ours the choosing  
Of lot or place;  
Ours the leaving of  
All to His grace:  
His perfect wisdom stands every test,  
And knows no failure; God's plan is best.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### WE THANK THEE.

For food and raiment, light and air,  
For all of nature's gifts so fair,  
For joy and gladness, everywhere,  
    Father in Heaven, we thank Thee.

For peace and plenty through the land,  
For homes unbroken by death's hand,  
For strength to finish as we planned,  
    Father in Heaven, we thank Thee.

For watchful care through the year,  
For shelter when the storm was near,  
For loving hearts and friendships dear,  
    Father in Heaven, we thank Thee.

For Mary's high exalted Son,  
For grace through Him the wrong to shun,  
For rest and home when earth is done,  
    Father in Heaven, we thank Thee.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE DARKENED GLASS.

Much of life in mist is shrouded  
And we only know in part,  
For with human reason clouded  
How shall God to man impart  
Truth eternal;  
Truth to penetrate the heart.

Through the glass of earthly vision  
Things are dark and dimly traced,  
And the soul beholds its mission  
Only in the light of grace:  
Light eternal,  
Streaming from the Father's face.

Problems of this life should therefore  
Urge our souls on God to call,  
As we ask the why and wherefore  
Of His purpose in it all:  
Wondrous purpose,  
Souls from error to recall.

Come then, oh, thou great revealer,  
Open up the book divine  
And to every true believer  
Speak in tones of truth sublime:  
Speak to show us  
That our lives are part of thine.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### PERFECT PEACE.

In perfect peace: Whose mind is staid  
On Thee shall never be afraid;  
Whose faith Jehovah's might doth prove  
Cannot be harmed, cannot be moved.

In perfect peace: Amid the rush  
Of life to feel the sacred hush;  
The deep repose, the quiet rest,  
Relief for all the care oppressed.

In perfect peace: Content to dwell  
Within his love where all is well;  
Content to place in His control  
The varied interests of the soul.

In perfect peace—Nor chance nor change  
Can alter with God doth arrange,  
Time's ruthless hand may work its will,  
But God remains the sovereign still.

In perfect peace: The tumult o'er,  
The haven reached, sin tossed no more.  
A place of refuge from the storm,  
Calm after strife, for darkness dawn.

In perfect peace: Beneath His care  
It matters not if here or there;  
E'en through this earthly life shall cease  
Abideth still God's perfect peace.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### EMMANUEL.

Let earth rejoice: Let all be glad who mourn!  
Emmanuel, the Prince of peace is born.

Wonder of wonders; God in flesh revealed!  
Emmanuel the covenant hath sealed.

For ages past men sought for God in vain:  
Emmanuel hath rent the vail in twain.

No more in sin, no more in darkness grope,  
Emmanuel the gates of light doth ope.

Ye captives, bound in iron chains of vice,  
Emmanuel redeems through sacrifice.

Weary of toil,—by countless duties pressed,  
Emmanuel now waits to give you rest.

Heart-sick and sore, who find in earth no cure;  
Emmanuel hath balm that's lasting, sure.

Exiles from God,—all who afar may roam,  
Emmanuel has come to lead you home.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE WEB OF LIFE.

Into the web of life  
Weave faith; and thou shalt know  
The fabric fashioned by thy hands  
To wondrous strength shall grow.

Weave in the threads of hope,  
And weave them through thy deeds;  
Their varying hues shall give to life  
The color that it needs.

Into thy life weave love,  
Whose golden skeins alone  
Shall add a beauty and a charm,  
A lustre of their own.

Weave faith and hope and love,  
These three; and bye and bye,  
A rich design thou shalt create  
To please the Master's eye.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### PROCRASTINATION.

The path of Christ runs by your door,  
Arouse, thee, then, and take it!  
The road to evil seek no more,  
Arouse, thee, and forsake it!

Plead not, like Felix, long ago,  
A more convenient season;  
But search within thy soul to know,  
For this delay a reason.

Say! can it be that o'er thy life  
Some fair Drusilla bendeth?  
Fling from thee this unhallowed wife  
E'er mercy thou offendeth.

For lo! the preacher speaketh still  
Of judgment on the morrow:  
Accept the Christ! delay not till  
The day is dark with sorrow.

The path of Christ runs by your door,  
Oh! hasten, brother, take it!  
And leave the beaten way of sin,  
Oh! hasten and forsake it.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### THE DIVINE HELPER.

When sin has plunged my soul in gloom,  
When midnight comes instead of noon;  
When on the verge of ruin vast,  
My heart cries out to Thee at last;  
Then, Jesus, speak my sins forgiven  
And light for me the way to heaven.

When sorrow chafes my spirit sore,  
And grief comes to me o'er and o'er,  
When fear and doubt my heart oppress,  
And fill my life with deep distress;  
Then, Saviour, drive away my fear  
And whisper to me words of cheer.

When life is hard, and harder still  
The road that leads to Zion's hill;  
When danger often near me lurks,  
Disaster, too, its havoc works;  
Oh! Lord of might, reach down Thine arm  
And save Thy servant from all harm.

And when the messenger of death  
Shall close my eyes, and steal my breath;  
When I shall bid my friends adieu,  
With earth receding from my view;  
Then, Jesus, Saviour, Mighty Lord,  
Thy promise and Thy power afford.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT.

Only a star in the eastern skies,  
Shining with holy light;  
Only a star that the wise men saw  
As they gazed with eager sight.

Only a song by the heavenly choir  
Chanted o'er Bethlehem's plain,  
"Glory to God" and "Peace upon earth,"  
Re-echoes the glad refrain.

Only a babe in a manger rude,  
A child in the cattle's stall;  
Only a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes,  
Yet the Saviour of us all.

Only the Christ of the long ago,  
Coming to Bethlehem town;  
Only the Christ of the prophet's dream,  
The Messiah of great renown.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### A HUMAN CRY.

If I should happen to lose my way  
In this world of sin and strife;  
If, at the last, I shall fail to find  
The way of eternal life,—  
Then, pity me, God! Thou Master of men,  
And grant me another chance again.

For there are so many songs that lure  
My feet from the narrow way;  
And the darkening shades of the night fall fast  
After the close of the day.  
O! can I be lost 'neath a starless sky  
With no one to hear my despairing cry.

The years of my life on the dial of time  
Go by like a swift-winged bird,  
And I soon shall stand at the judgment bar,  
I, who have so often erred;  
Then, speak to me, God, O! speak to me then,  
And grant me another chance again.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

### IN HOC SIGNO VINCES!

Not with the gleam of helmets  
Nor flash of sword and shield,  
The armies of Jehovah  
Go forth to take the field.

No roar of mighty cannon,  
No sound of clashing steel,  
No trampling out the life blood  
Beneath war's iron heel.  
No trail of human sorrow  
To mark the path of strife;  
No death or desolation  
To mar the peace of life.

But in the name of Mercy  
His armies onward move,  
To teach to warring nations  
The brotherhood of Love.  
The sacred cross of Jesus  
On every banner fly,  
And "In Hoc Signo Vinctus"  
Forever is the cry.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE CHRIST.

He comes! The Christ expected long!  
The silent night is stirred by song  
Of "Peace on Earth, Good will to men,"  
The lowly Christ of Bethlehem.

We see the childhood life unfold,  
And soon we find in Temple old,  
With knowledge of God's wondrous ways,  
The faithful Christ of boyhood days.

He taught men freedom to secure;  
He preached the Gospel to the poor,  
Regardless of the Sceptic's frown—  
The fearless Christ of Nazareth town.

His presence cheered the darkest night,  
And chased away all gloom and fright:  
His voice rebuked the angry sea—  
The Saviour Christ of Galilee.

His days were spent in doing good;  
He healed, as only Saviour could,  
The sick and sore, the blind and lame—  
The Christ of wonder-working fame.

He drank the cup of bitter woe  
Alone: because He loved us so;

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

---

In garden still, what agony!  
The lonely Christ of Gethsemane.  
His life was full of righteousness;

And friend and foe as well confess  
"I find in Him no fault at all,"  
The spotless Christ of Pilate's Hall.

But hate and malice justice buy:  
The Son of God goes forth to die:  
He bears the cross through crowd and press,  
The silent Christ with scarlet dress.

Come, now! And gaze upon the cross!  
See how for you He suffered loss!  
O! Hallowed cross! O! Sacred tree!  
The suffering Christ of Calvary.

But death can never conquer life,  
For life will win in every strife:  
Death now from humankind is torn;  
The risen Christ of Easter morn.

He leaves the world, yet never leaves;  
His spirit still to mankind cleaves:  
He bids us preach, lest men forget,  
The ascended Christ of Olivet.

O! Blessed Christ! Whose presence means  
The glory of our fondest dreams;  
The Christ who comes to earth again;  
The changeless Christ who dwells with men.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### LIFE.

Life is more than merely living  
The allotted time of men;  
More than simply passing over  
A brief three-score years and ten.  
Life is something higher, holier,  
Than our low conceptions frame;  
Something broader, something vaster,  
Something worthier of our aim.

Life is something sweeter, nobler,  
Than the poet's song can tell;  
Something more sublime and glorious  
Than the highest note can swell.  
Life is living; life is loving;  
Life is working hand and brain;  
Life is learning, life is giving,  
Life is serving God and man.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### CONTENTMENT.

Be thou content, within thy soul possessing  
The calm and quiet of a life of trust;  
Then art thou rich beyond the world's conception.

The sumptuous feast or solitary crust  
Are both alike to thee, if in thy quest  
Thou findest God, the highest and the best.

Content to know, that in His wise provision,  
Nor great nor small escape His loving care;  
The lowliest souls from Him all good deriving,  
While kings and princes in His bounty share!  
Who looks to Him need have of want no fear;  
God's angel ministry is ever near.

Be thou content. Like waves around thee surging

The spirit of unrest pervades the air;  
Shut fast the door that guards thy soul's seclusion,

And let no thought of worldliness be there:  
Whate'er to thee in wisdom may be sent  
Accept submissively, and be content.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### ALONE WITH GOD.

Alone with God, at Jesus' feet,  
To learn His gracious will;  
For in this safe and sure retreat  
The soul at once grows still.

Alone with God; far from the noise,  
The tumult and the strife;  
'Tis here the soul must gain its poise,  
Its furnishings for life.

Alone with God; in secret prayer,  
With no disturbing voice;  
The trusting heart finds refuge there  
And weary ones rejoice.

Alone with God; and out of touch  
With all the world holds dear;  
For in His presence, O, how much  
Of earth must disappear.

Alone with God, yet not alone,  
For here all spirits meet;  
And God, to all, himself makes known,  
In blest communion sweet.



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### CONFIDENCE.

When I know that God surrounds me,  
That His arms are wrapt around me,  
What have I to fear?

While the voice of one that loves me  
Speaks from out the skies above me,  
Whispering words of cheer.

Though the fiery furnace try me,  
Come the storm and tempest nigh me,  
These come but to test.

When the Saviour stands beside me  
And beneath His wings I hide me,  
I can safely rest.

When the way is all uncertain,  
Dark and heavy hangs the curtain,  
Veiling out the light;  
Still the Father's loving kindness,  
Illuminating human blindness,  
Leadeth all aright.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE ONLY WAY.

No other name to men is given  
Save this alone,  
The name of Him who for our sin  
Did once atone.

One hand alone can give the touch  
Of saving power ;  
Who feels the touch shall strength receive  
For every hour.

One only path there is that leads  
To refuge sweet ;  
Who finds this way shall find at last  
A safe retreat.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### IS IT NOTHING TO YOU?

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?  
Is it nothing that He, your Saviour, should die?  
    Comes there never a feeling  
    Thy hearts' love revealing,  
As you gaze on the cross uplifted on high?

Is it nothing to you, can redemption be bought  
At such marvelous cost, and yet be unsought?  
    The Christ mutely pleading—  
    And still all unheeding,  
Canst thou pass Him by without ever a thought?

Is it nothing to you though the heavens should  
    weep,  
And the heart of the Father its vigilance keep  
    O'er a Son that is slain,  
    Amid anguish and pain,  
Is it nothing to you? Does thy conscience still  
    sleep?

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?  
Does this soul-stirring question bring forth no  
    reply?  
    Can you still pass along  
    With the unholy throng,  
With never a care for the Christ who is nigh?

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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Is it nothing to you, oh, can it be true,  
That the sufferings of Christ have no meaning for  
you?

Though your Saviour hath died,  
By your sins crucified,  
Is it nothing to you? Is it nothing to you?

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE SOUL'S DESIRE.

In the glow of early morning,  
At the waking of the day,  
How my soul for God is yearning  
With desires that come to stay.

When at noon the sun is beaming  
With its rays of golden light,  
For its strength my heart is leaning  
On the bosom of His might.

In the crimson glow of evening,  
When the world seems bathed in fire,  
Still for God my spirit breathing  
Finds in Him its great desire.

In the midnight with its stillness  
When the hush is over all;  
Rests my soul in God's great goodness,  
Waiting for the morning's call.

All things else my soul now leaving,  
Craves naught but His gracious power,  
Whether morn, or noon, or evening,  
Or at midnight's darkest hour.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE REALMS OF FAITH.

How little do we understand  
Of God and His mysterious ways!  
The doings of His unseen hand  
Are shrouded in a misty maze.  
His dealings with us are so strange  
That sometimes in our doubts we ask—  
Why He, who all things doth arrange,  
Hath portioned us so hard a task?

For life is hard, and oftentimes,  
When more than heavy seems the load,  
Our weary, over-burdened minds  
Are tortured as by sharpened goad;  
Yes! tortured with the painful thought,  
Thought of disordered brain begot,  
That God, our maker, who hath brought  
Us into being loves us not.

For if He loves us, why does He  
Seem oft' to leave us all alone  
To grapple with life's mystery,  
Into such great proportions grown?  
What purpose can He have in view  
In veiling all His strange designs,

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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And shutting out from mortal view  
All knowledge of the mystic lines?

O! blinded reason stay thy power,  
Or thou wilt drive us to despair!  
The realms of faith above thee tower,  
Then haste, my soul, find shelter there!  
'Tis there that thou shouldst ever turn,  
Believing in the Crucified,  
And soon shalt thou in fullness learn  
To trust Him, who for thee hast died.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### SILENT PRAYER.

Hush every voice and every sound,  
Let noise and clamor cease ;  
Let silence dwell without, within,  
To bring its sweet release.

Let not the faintest whispered breath  
Disturb the quietude,  
Nor even thought of worldliness  
This sacredness intrude.

For while a soul communes with God,  
Let nothing enter there  
To bring confusion to the mind  
That waits on God in prayer.

For what is prayer, but longing for  
The things of heavenly worth ;  
The spirit's flight, unseen, unheard,  
Up through the mists of earth.

And what is prayer, but entrance way  
Into the heart of God ;  
The silent tread of burdened thought  
O'er paths by angels trod.

The blending of divinity  
With human heart and kind,



## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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The lifting of the human up  
Into the great Divine.

If prayer be such a sacred thing,  
If God invites to prayer,  
Let it be wafted silently  
Like fragrance on the air.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### THE THOUGHT OF GOD.

Some call thee God, Creator, Lord,  
And some the Great Unknown;  
Jehovah, Mighty Spirit, Thou,  
The King upon the throne;  
But as for me I would the rather  
Come to Thee and call Thee Father.

Some think of Thee as final Judge  
With countenance severe,  
Before whose awful majesty  
The nations must appear;  
But let me not like many another  
Forget to think of Thee as Brother.

Some know Thee only as a God  
With power to slay and kill;  
A fierce, avenging Deity,  
Who works destruction still;  
But O! the great and wondrous favor  
To learn to know Thee as a Saviour.

## UNPRETENTIOUS VERSES

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### WATCHING OVER ALL.

In this busy world of action  
God is watching over all;  
Empires vast and nations ruleth,  
Yet He notes the sparrow's fall.

He it is that guides the planets  
As they roll through boundless space,  
His the hand that paints the lily,  
With its loveliness and grace.

Drives the foam across the ocean,  
Gives the waves their mighty force,  
And with equal care and patience  
Marks the tiny streamlet's course.

Fans the tempest into fury,  
Hurls the lightning from the sky,  
Yet as gently as a mother  
Stoops to hear an infant's cry.

Hangs the sun within the heavens,  
That its light may blaze afar;  
With the taper of His glory  
Lighteth every twinkling star.

Lifts the lofty towering mountains,  
Stretches out the restless sea;  
Yet with tender love and mercy  
Watcheth over you and me.





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